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104 rearranged. Consonants also could be revalued to provide for the common 'ng' and 'ny' at the beginning of many words, and for the frequent 'tch' we used 'tj'. Vagaries of
191 pronunciation occurred in unwritten and slurred words, such as 'nama' and 'ngama' (the verbs 'to see' and 'to hear'). For years I was confused by the almost indistinguishable differences (all vowels being short) between the verb 'ngurra' (I lie down), the noun 'ngurru' (a nose), the adjectival suffix 'nguru' (from), and the noun 'ngurra' (a 'fire'). 'Jukor' is a louse whilst any sort of fat is 'jukorr'. There seems to be no connexion between the terms, except
[262] that the fat of any fish or game is considered a rare and
[515] tasty morsel, the sight of it exciting children as much as would a tin of lollies, and head-lice are small fat parasites which women and children gather from each other's heads and eat with obvious relish.

• 193 It has been said that aboriginal languages have a common root-stock, and that some features are common to them all.
[197] The indefinite article in language is missing in Arnhem Land, as it is elsewhere, but 'ka' is used in the north as the equivalent of the English conjunction 'and'. With one or two exceptions aboriginal adjectives follow the noun, not only in the north but throughout Australia. Some forms of the pronoun 'ngara' (I) or 'ngaraku' ('my' or 'mine') are found in all dialects from Cape York to Cape Leeuwin. In addition to singular and plural pronouns, there are also first, second, and third duals: 'I', 'you', and 'he' are there; 'ngali' refers to the two of us when both are present; 'nyilinyu' indicates two persons, of whom one is absent—for example, if a man said to me 'Who made that canoe?' and it belonged to an absent friend and me, I should reply 'nyilinyu' (the two of us 'made it'). 'Numa' is the form of 'you two' and 'munda' refers to 'those two'.

The language runs to inclusive and exclusive plurals in which 'napuru' refers exclusively to those of us in the

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vicinity of the speaker and 'limeru' includes everybody, far and wide, such as the human race.

Stone Age men have little use for numbers, for they have so little to count. If a definite number is used at all, it is usually under five. Fingers are the theoretical basis for counting, and one is 'wonggain'; two 'marrama'; three is two plus one; four is two and two; five is known as a hand, 'korng'. Six is hand plus one, and so on to ten, which is two hands, 'korng-marrama'. When pidgin is in use, the numerals are one to five, and after that it is 'big mob'.

Aboriginal languages are 'alive' and are being altered to meet new needs and conditions. Many new words have been absorbed as a result of the Macassars trading here, and so complete has been the acceptance and use of these terms, that the oldest nomads, some of whom travelled to Macassar on the trading proas, do not readily recognize their origin. With the advent of white traders, the Yulengor began to assimilate English words, and at Yirrkala I found a boy called Deamer (steamer) and a girl Giggerat (cigarette). Soap is 'jope', scissors are 'thither', razor is 'yeezer', cockroach 'karkrartj', and from one end of the country to the other, flying fox has been corrupted to 'bailanbok'. A nomad can do no other than reckon the hours of the day by the sun, and as a consequence, clocks and watches are also known as sun, 'wolu'.

'Dimit-dimirr' is the word for barbed fronds on the pandanus palm, as well as for thorny trees and spiky anemones, but now it is given to introduced lemon trees and barbed wire. 'To swim' is 'waitun' and to this they add the suffix 'mirry', something like our suffix 'ful', meaning 'full of', and the resultant 'waitunamirry' becomes a boat's propellor. 'Kurrta', denoting fire, firewood, or smoke, now serves for an engine, and 'kurrtamirry', full of fire, is a shotgun or rifle. Any law is 'rorm', and the verb 'to give' is 'gurrpan', so that to teach something is 'rormgurrpan',